



EAGLE

# Wildlife Law

# Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ **28 wildlife traffickers arrested in 5 countries**
- ✓ **A corrupt police officer with 2 accomplices arrested in Madagascar for trafficking endangered tortoises**
- ✓ **7 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon in 2 separated operations with almost 50 kg of ivory**
- ✓ **3 ivory traffickers arrested in Cameroon, using art dealing as a cover for trafficking**
- ✓ **3 ape traffickers arrested in Cameroon, a chimpanzee rescued**
- ✓ **2 traffickers arrested with 100 kg of hippo ivory in Uganda, representing a slaughter of 58 hippos.**
- ✓ **6 traffickers sentenced to 2- 3 years imprisonment in Uganda**
- ✓ **13 tortoise traffickers received sentences of 1- 2 years imprisonment in Madagascar**

## Summary

28 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 5 countries.

3 traffickers arrested with 9 Radiated Tortoises, one of them a corrupt policeman. A general tried to use his influence to release him, but this was combated by the ALARM legal team. The other trafficker worked as a consultant for the Ministry of International Affairs.

2 traffickers arrested with 100 kg of hippo ivory in Uganda. 234 pieces of hippo teeth represent 58 massacred hippos. The amount of contraband gives a snapshot of the extermination of hippos for the international illegal trade. The traffickers were selling it to the agents of international buyers. 10 days after the arrest the traffickers were prosecuted and both sentenced to 2 years in prison.

3 ape traffickers, members of a ring specializing in trafficking of live animals were arrested in Cameroon attempting to smuggle a chimp in a car. The trafficker concealed the locked cage on the back of the truck with a dusty tarpaulin in order to evade law enforcement detection. Akim, as the chimp was called, was frail, underfed and wore a melancholic look when she was rescued. She was taken to the IDA Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Rescue Centre for lifetime care.

14 ivory traffickers were arrested in 4 countries. 4 ivory traffickers arrested with 44 kg of ivory, 6 tusks, still fresh, in Gabon. 2 of them, a village chief, who is also a local government official, and a Malian



*3 ape traffickers arrested and a live chimpanzee was rescued.*

trafficker were arrested in act trying to sell the ivory in the centre of the country. During interrogation they denounced two more members of their ring, one of them an employee of a logging company, and the two were arrested. 3 Nigerian ivory traffickers arrested with 6 pieces of ivory weighing over 5 kg in Gabon. 2 significant ivory traffickers were arrested with 2 ivory carved ivory tusks, 2 statuettes and several other carved pieces in Cameroon. Both belong to a wider ring of traffickers, operating in the area for years. Another ivory trafficker was arrested with 14 sculpted ivory objects. The art dealers use the trade as a perfect cover not only to traffic in ivory but

also to have an easy access and exposure to clients. The same pattern was witnessed last month during a similar operation.

A wildlife trafficker was arrested with a lion skin, lion bones and a skull in Uganda. The skin was fresh, as the lion was killed in nearby Murchison Falls National Park. The lion numbers in the park dropped to 130 within a decade (by 60 % - the most severe decline in entire Uganda).

Several strong punishments were achieved in court cases in Uganda and Madagascar where a total of 19 wildlife traffickers were sentenced to 1 - 3 years imprisonment.

## Cameroon – LAGA



An ivory trafficker arrested with 14 sculpted ivory objects

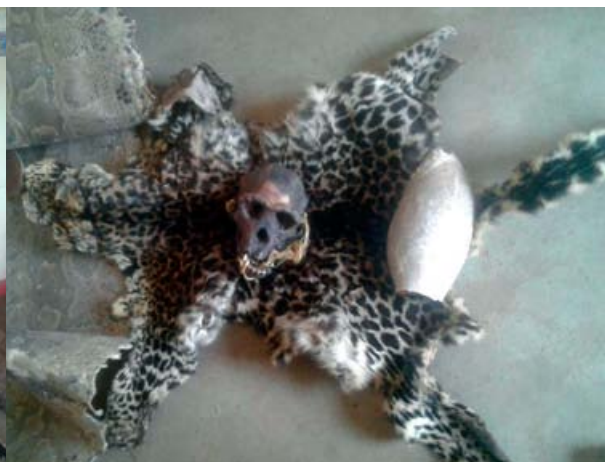


2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 carved tusks,

■ 3 ape traffickers, members of a ring, specializing on trafficking alive animals, arrested trying to smuggle a chimp in a car. A live chimpanzee was rescued. One of them, the declared owner of the chimpanzee, confessed that he had a caged chimp for 12 years, but the rescued chimp is barely 6 years old, which seems to indicate other chimps have been captured, died and replaced during this time. The trafficker concealed the locked cage on the back of the truck with a dusty tarpaulin in order to evade law enforcement detection. The chimp female was probably an orphan chimp that had been separated from her mother after she was shot killed for bushmeat. Akim, as the

chimp was called, was frail, underfed and wore a melancholic look when she was rescued. She was taken to the IDA Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Rescue Centre for lifetime care.

- 2 significant ivory traffickers arrested with 2 carved tusks, 2 statuettes and several other carved pieces. Both belong to a wider circle of traffickers, operating in the area for years. One of them owns a restaurant where they regularly made deals with traffickers. At the time of their arrest, an ivory statuette was visible in the restaurant. This may have served as an ad slot for the traffickers or a lead to inform potential traffickers. He buys ivory from poachers, sculpts it in various forms and sells them to potential buyers.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 14 sculpted ivory objects. He operated from a hotel kiosk, using wood carving as a cover to sell illegal ivory carved objects. The art dealers use the trade as a perfect



A trafficker arrested with a leopard skin, a chimp skull

cover not only to traffic in ivory but also to have an easy access and exposure to clients. The same pattern was witnessed last month during a similar operation.

- A trafficker arrested with a leopard skin, a chimp skull and other wildlife contraband. He regularly trafficked diverse wildlife products, buying them from neighbouring villages to supply his potential buyers.
- Two court judgements were passed with an ivory trafficker sentenced to 3 months imprisonment while the second ruling was appealed.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with an of-

ficial from the Enough Project that seeks to assist wildlife rangers at the Waza National Park. The discussions focused on an analysis of their project and imperatives that must be tackled for a successful implementation.

- He also held a meeting with an official from the Prague zoo who visited the office to talk about a buffer zone project the zoo is intending to carry out in the Dja area.
- Another meeting was held with Thomas Bacha of IUCN to discuss issues related to organizational governance and transparency.
- The recruitment process of legal advisers started to strengthen the legal team.

## Congo – PALF

- The Coordinator met with the EU Ambassador, who was very supportive to the PALF activities and willing to help to develop better relationship between PALF and the Government of Congo.
- More meetings were held with the Director of the Protected Areas to review the legal cases of wildlife crime and the General Inspector of the Ministry of Environment to update him on recent PALF activities.

- The intense recruitment process continued in order to get a stronger and larger team.

### Action needed:

- Letter to the Minister of Justice requesting a harsh and rapid removal of magistrates involved in corruption.

## Gabon – AALF

- 4 ivory traffickers arrested with 44 kg of ivory, 6 tusks, still fresh. 2 of them, a village chief, who is also a local government official, and a Malian trafficker were arrested in act trying to sell the ivory in the centre of the country. First they were trying to escape but they remained in the focus of the team of Police and Conservation Justice, and were arrested after their car was stopped and checked. During interrogation they denounced two more members of their ring, one of them an employee of a logging company. Both were arrested a few days later.



2 of 4 ivory traffickers arrested with 44 kg of ivory



3 Nigerian ivory traffickers arrested with 6 pieces of ivory





2 traffickers arrested with 3 leopard skins

- 3 Nigerian ivory traffickers arrested with 6 pieces of ivory weighing over 5 kg. The first was arrested after his suspicious behaviour called attention of the police and conservation Justice team. He repeatedly entered and left a building, carrying a heavy bag. After being confronted by police he gave a series of inconsistent answers, and then he was asked to open the bag, where the ivory was concealed. He admitted that he was waiting for a person who promised to buy it. After arriving to the police station he revealed his two accomplices, who were immediately arrested too.
- They were swiftly prosecuted and sentenced to 6 months in jail, the highest possible sentence in Gabon. They also have to pay almost 2,000 USD on fines and damages. After serving the sentence

they will be ordered out of the Gabon territory and forbidden from entering the country for 5 years.

- 2 traffickers arrested with 3 leopard skins in the north-east of the country. One of them was arrested in act when he was surprised and arrested the moment when was trying to sell the contraband. After he was brought to police station, he revealed the other member of the ring who was arrested an hour later after being identified at a bus station trying to flee. The area has four National Parks and is still rich in wildlife, but the numbers of many animals are rapidly decreasing due to intense poaching and trafficking. The three leopards, one adult and two kittens, were slaughtered in the Mekambo area, bordering Mwagna National Park.

- The coordinator met with the new Anti-Poaching Director to introduce him to the project and with the General Secretary of the Minister in charge of Waters and Forests. Series of meetings were held with other officials.

## Republic of Guinea – GALF

- One of the two ivory traffickers arrested in October was prosecuted and sentenced to 3 months in prison and to pay over 200 USD on fines and damages. 2 traffickers, arrested in October with 9 sea turtle shells were sentenced to two months in prison.
- Ofir Drori, the founding director of EAGLE Network and Charlotte Houpline, the Director of WARA, visited Guinea to support the project management and strengthen the relationship with diplomatic community and government authorities.
- Meetings were held with the US Ambassador, Ambassador of Great Britain, German Chancellor, EU

team of active collaborators, Minister of Environment and other officials.

- The coordinator and the legal team held a series of meetings with local officials, prosecutors, with the Head of the Cabinet of the Minister of Justice, and diplomatic representation of the US Embassy, EU and German Embassy to prepare meetings with the Ambassadors. More meetings were held with focal point of CITES and the focal point of INTERPOL.
- The recruitment process continued to build stronger investigation department.

## Togo – TALFF

- 2 ivory traffickers, arrested in June with 124 kg of ivory near the Benin border, were prosecuted and sentenced to 4 months in prison and to pay almost 2,500 USD on fines and damages. The car, which they used to transport the ivory, remained seized by the police.
- A series of meetings with authorities were held, namely with state councils, judges and the focal point of INTERPOL to discuss on-going cases.
- A meeting was held with Dr. Thomas E. J. Leuteritz, a biology expert from the Division of the Scientific Authority of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, who visited Togo on his mission.

## SENEGAL - SALF

- Ofir Drori arrived to Senegal to support the management and to strengthen the relationship with diplomatic community and government authorities. More than 20 meetings were held, with ambassadors (USA, United Kingdom, Netherlands), Ministries (Director of Cabinet Justice, SG Environment, Minister of Interior) and other authorities to strengthen external relations and to gain a support for the fight for wildlife law enforcement and fight against corruption.
- As a result of the intense meetings held with the Minister of Environment the Collaboration Agreement between the Ministry of Environment and SALF was signed.
- Ofir Drori worked with the coordinator and the assistant coordinator to prepare the transition of the role of the coordinator to Cecile Bloch, as Charlotte Houpline, the WARA director will focus on a new replication within EAGLE Network.
- The SALF project finished the process of getting in compliance with the Labor code by signing the work contracts with the team and putting in place the needed legal arrangements.



*Charlotte Houpline with the Minister of Environment and signed Collaboration Agreement*

- The recruitment process continued with effort to build a stronger team. Two investigators and media officer started their test period.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with two large tusks, weighting 13.5 kg in a small town next to the Burkina Faso border. They were caught in the act during an attempt to sell the contraband in a hotel. Although they were suspicious and ran in and out of the meeting place trying to detect law enforcement effort, the team outsmarted them and locked them behind bars. The criminals were using their international connections to traffic ivory across the borders, they confessed for trafficking the ivory from Burkina Faso.
- 2 training sessions were organized by AALF-B and Nature Tropicale, 50 officials from Wildlife Authority, police and Naval Forces were trained on



the wildlife law enforcement.

- The coordinator met with the Director of Cabinet of the Ministry in charge of wildlife on the finalization of the collaboration agreement with the Ministry.
- A series of meetings were held with different authorities, including the Head of Criminal Brigade Director of W National Park, Technical Director and Director General of CENAGREF, and the Director of Conservation and Development of African Parks Network on the management of the Pendjari National Park.
- 2 investigators and one legal adviser ended the test period and became members of the team.



*2 ivory traffickers arrested with two large tusks,*

## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- 2 traffickers arrested with 100 kg of hippo ivory in western part of the country. They have been trafficking wildlife products across Uganda and DRC, using canoes to bring contraband across White Nile and Lake Albert. To the place of planned transaction they arrived by motorbike with the contraband concealed inside plastic bag. It was full of 234 pieces of hippo teeth, presenting 58 massacred hippos. The amount of contraband gives a snapshot of the extermination of hippos for the international illegal trade. Hippo ivory is often destined for Asia, where it is carved into jewellery, replacing in this way more expensive elephant ivory. The traffickers were selling it to the agents of international buyers. 10 days after the arrest the traffickers were prosecuted and both sentenced to 2 years in prison - a good deterring sentence for wildlife trafficking.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in the west of the country with one tusk, weighting 7 kg, one of them a medical officer working in an international hospital. They pleaded not guilty, but in spite of that they are kept behind bars, awaiting trial.
- 2 wildlife traffickers arrested with a live young pangolin in a small town near the capital city. Unfortunately the stress endured during capture and captivity had an impact on the animal, and in spite of the intense care of veterinaries of Uganda Wildlife Authority and Entebbe Zoo, the young animal died two days after seizure. The 17th CoP of CITES in October this year listed all pangolin spe-

cies on Appendix 1, which made any international trade with them illegal.



*2 wildlife traffickers arrested with a live young pangolin (photo Jonathan Stark)*

- A wildlife trafficker arrested with a lion skin, lion bones and a skull. The skin was fresh, as the lion was killed in nearby Murchison Falls National Park. The trafficker was arrested in act while an attempt to sell the contraband in a liquor shop, although he resisted the arrest and tried to hide the contraband. The lion numbers in the park dropped to 130 within a decade (by 60 % - the most severe decline in entire Uganda).

- Several more strong punishments were achieved in followed court cases. 2 ivory traffickers, arrested in north of the country in August with 2 ivory tusks, were sentenced to 2 years in prison. Another trafficker, arrested in October with 32 hippo teeth, was sentenced to two years in prison. A hippo ivory trafficker, arrested in October with 24 pieces of hippo teeth, 2 python skins and 1 skinned pangolin, was sentenced to 3 years in default or a fine of 400 USD, but as he was not able to pay the fine, he is serving the prison sentence.



2 traffickers arrested with 100 kg of hippo ivory

- Danielle Mbui, the financial officer conducted a mission to Uganda to inspect the work of the EAGLE Uganda financial officer, to audit, assess the



2 traffickers were arrested with 100 kg of hippo ivory in Uganda. The number of 234 hippo teeth representing a horrible massacre of 58 slaughtered hippos. Still it is only a fraction of all the hippo ivory, illegally traded on international market. The records of CITES show that between 2004 and 2014 about 60 tons of hippo ivory were imported to Hong Kong – and almost a half of it from Uganda. Since 2014 it is not legal to export hippo teeth from Uganda, in spite of that about 400 kg was seized this year. It is trafficked in a similar way as an elephant ivory, but it may be easier due to the size of hippo teeth. In Asia it is used to make jewelry, statues and decorations – and very

often exported to Europe.

Hippos are the third largest land mammals after the elephant and the rhinoceros, weighing in at 1,500–1,800 kg. They spend most of their days in water and their raised eyes, ears and nostrils allow them to remain almost entirely submerged for long periods of time. After spending the day in lakes and rivers, hippos venture out at dusk and spend the night grazing, traveling up to 8km and consuming up to 68kg of grass each night to maintain their enormous size. In spite of their size and slightly clumsy appearance, they can easily outrun a human - hippos can reach speeds of up to 30 or even 40km per hour on land. They are considered to be one of the most dangerous African animals. Their tusk like canines can grow a foot long and they are very sharp. And they are the reason for which more and more hippos are killed.

The population of hippos is rapidly decreasing; they are classified as vulnerable by IUCN Red List. The main threats are poaching and habitat loss, which in some areas already lead to their extinction. In democratic Republic of Congo, where the seized ivory originated from, their population dropped by 95%. In Uganda there is several thousand left mostly in two national parks – Murchison Falls and Elisabeth National park from more than 20,000 in 1970s. Total African population was estimated to be 125,000 – 148,000 in 2008. Eight years later the numbers are much smaller.





*A wildlife trafficker arrested with a lion skin, lion bones and a skull.*

accounting and support application of financial procedures.

- NRCN team hosted Mr. Matt Muir from the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The Coordinator and Matt Muir met with US Embassy officials in Uganda to update them on the progress in the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime in Uganda. A plan for another meeting with the Embassy officials for December 2016 to make a follow up on the steps to address the challenges was set up.

## Madagascar - ALARM

- 3 traffickers arrested with 9 Radiated Tortoises, one of them a corrupt policeman. A general tried to use his influence to release him, but this was combated by the ALARM legal team. The other trafficker worked as a consultant for the Ministry of International Affairs. The traffickers brought the animals in a bag to a hotel in the centre of the capital city with intention to sell them for an international market, but were arrested in act instead.
- Several good punishments were reached in the court cases followed by the legal team, bringing a good deterrent to wildlife criminals. The 6 traffickers arrested in September with 198 Radiated Tortoises were prosecuted, 5 of them were sentenced to 2.5 years in jail, one accomplice to 10 month in jail, and ordered to pay over 60,000 USD in damages and fines.
- The 2 traffickers arrested with 227 Radiated Tortoises in September were prosecuted, the head of the ring was sentenced to 1.5 year in prison, her accomplice to 1 year in prison, and they were ordered to pay 1,200 USD in damages and fines.
- The legal team followed a case of 5 traffickers, arrested in July with 643 Radiated Tortoises. The court sentenced 4 of them to 2 years in prison, one accomplice to 1.5 year in prison. They were ordered to pay 30,000 USD in damages and fines.
- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation

Officer of EAGLE Network, conducted a mission to Madagascar to support the recruitment process, to train the team members in procedures and to support external relations. His presence was used to initiate an arrest operation.

- The coordinator and the Monitoring and Evaluation officer of the EAGLE Network met with the Ambassador of Germany and his communication officer to introduce the ALARM project and establish a relationship, leading to a support in combating



*3 traffickers arrested with 9 Radiated Tortoises, one of them a corrupt policeman.*



wildlife crime in Madagascar. The Ambassador ensured the coordinator about his support, stating that and law enforcement are the priorities of the German Embassy in Madagascar.

- A series of meetings were held with prosecutors, heads of police, regional representatives of

DREEF (Ministry in charge of wildlife) and other officials to discuss cooperation during operations and legal follow-up of the cases.

- Intensive recruitment process continued with 3 new legal advisers and 3 investigators starting their test period.

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## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori arrived to Senegal and Guinea to support the management and to strengthen the relationship with diplomatic community and government authorities. More than 20 meetings were held, with ambassadors (USA, United Kingdom, Netherlands), Ministries (Director of Cabinet Justice, SG Environment, Minister of Interior) and other authorities to strengthen external relations and to gain a support for the fight for wildlife law enforcement and fight against corruption. As a result of the intense meetings held with the Minister of Environment the Collaboration Agreement between the Ministry of Environment and SALF was

signed.

- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of EAGLE Network, conducted a mission to Madagascar to support the recruitment process, to train the team members in procedures and to support external relations. His presence was used to initiate an arrest operation.
- Danielle Mbui, the financial officer conducted a mission to Uganda to inspect the work of the EAGLE Uganda financial officer, to audit, assess the accounting and support application of financial procedures.

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## International Media Coverage

- Ofir Drori's talk for TedxEde on Hunting wildlife traffickers - passion and activism in conservation

[Link to the talk](#)

### THE EAGLE Network

EAGLE: Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement, is a network of members across Africa, who are replicating effectively a program and operational model to undertake wildlife law enforcement, which is based on the LAGA-Cameroon model, trailed, practiced and tested since 2003. The EAGLE Network currently operates in nine African countries and keeps expanding.

The over-arching objective of the EAGLE Network is: *Developing civic activism and collaborating with governments and civil society to improve the application of national and international environmental legislation, through a program of activities: investi-*

*gations, arrests, prosecutions and publicity. Through this, EAGLE aims to generate a strong deterrent against the illegal trade in wildlife, timber and related criminal activities, including corruption.*

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